

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

MARK H. FRYE and LISA FONNER,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 5:17CV88

THE MARSHALL COUNTY COAL COMPANY,  
a Delaware Corporation  
and McELROY COAL COMPANY,  
a Delaware Corporation,

Defendants.

AMENDED COMPLAINT

Now come your Plaintiffs, Mark H. Frye and Lisa Fonner, by and through their counsel, Eric M. Gordon, Esquire, of Berry, Kessler, Crutchfield, Taylor & Gordon, and complains and avers, as follows:

COUNT I

1. Plaintiff, Mark H. Frye, has been at all relevant times the owner of property situate at 169 Frye's Lane, Cameron, Marshall County, West Virginia. Said property is more particularly described as 1.2203 acres, more or less, and shown on Tax Map 18, as Parcel No. 27.1, in Cameron District, Marshall County, West Virginia, and which property is more particularly described in the deed from Mark H. Frye and Judy E. Frye to Mark H. Frye, dated August 7, 2007, and of record in the Marshall County Clerk's Office in Deed Book 662, at page 127.

2. Plaintiff, Mark H. Frye, is also the owner of property adjacent to the above described property located in Marshall County, West Virginia. Said property is taxed as containing 93.8827 acres, more or less, and is shown on Tax Map 18, as Parcel No. 27, in

Cameron District, on Tax Map 17, as Parcel 1, in Cameron District, and on Tax Map 1, Parcels 137, 155, and 156 in Cameron Corporate District, Marshall County, West Virginia, and is described in a Deed dated March 13, 2017, in Deed Book 919, at page 535. Prior to acquiring this property from his mother, Shirley A. Frye, the plaintiff built a barn on the property and pastured cattle and horses on said property. In purchasing this property, the Plaintiff also acquired the right to use a spring and reservoir situate upon an adjoining parcel.

3. At all times relevant, Plaintiff Lisa Fonner has lived and worked on the properties with Plaintiff Mark H. Frye.

4. The Defendant, The Marshall County Coal Company, is a Delaware corporation licensed to do business in the State of West Virginia, with a local office address of Cameron Portal, 57 Goshorn Woods Road, Cameron, West Virginia, 26033.

5. The Defendant, McElroy Coal Company, is a Delaware corporation licensed to do business in the State of West Virginia, with a local office address of 46226 National Road, St. Clairsville, Ohio, 43950.

6. The Defendants, one or both of them, did, beginning in or about the Fall of 2014, and continuing through June of 2015, conduct long-wall mining and oil and gas well plugging operations, under and adjacent to the above described properties now owned by the Plaintiff, Mark H. Frye. During and subsequent to these operations by one or both of the Defendants the Plaintiffs have noticed and continue to notice damages to both properties, the structures thereon and the natural water supplies.

7. As a direct and proximate result of the negligent, illegal or improper long-wall mining operations conducted by one or both of the Defendants, the Plaintiff Mark H. Frye

suffered damages, all of which are continuing in nature, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Damage to the residence, barn, and other outbuildings on the property;
- b. a loss of natural water sources situate on or servicing the properties;
- c. a diminution of the total value of the properties;
- d. loss of use of the properties and/or structures situate thereupon;
- e. annoyance and inconvenience; and
- f. a functional impairment of the surface lands including physical changes having a significant impact on his lands current or reasonably foreseeable uses.

8. To date, the Defendants have failed to correct the damages or adequately compensate the Plaintiff Mark H. Frye for the same. Defendants have failed to do so despite knowing the extent of the Plaintiff's damages as well as their obligation to correct or compensate Plaintiff for the same.

9. As a direct and proximate result of mining operations the septic system in the residence was damaged or disrupted on two (2) separate occasions.

10. As a direct and proximate result of this damage and/or disruptions, gray water/septic water would back into and under the basement floor of the residence.

11. In 2016 Defendants retained a contractor or employee to work on said septic system. Defendant's contractor negligently failed to fix the septic system resulting in gray water/septic water lying in and under the basement for several months.

12. As a direct and proximate result of the back-up of gray water/septic water in the basement of the residence, Plaintiff, Lisa Fonner, has contracted Klebsiella Pneumoniae. She

has endured pain and suffering, suffered an inability to enjoy life, inability to do household and farm related services, and has been forced to incur medical bills.

**COUNT II**

13. Plaintiffs replead each and every allegation contained within Count I of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

14. The Defendants owe a duty to the Plaintiff Mark H. Frye, pursuant to the permit issued them, their own subsidence control plan, and, as well, the Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Control Act and the regulations promulgated thereto, to among other things, maintain the value and reasonably foreseeable use of the overlying surface lands; to correct any material damage to surface land, the facilities or structures located thereon or to compensate the owners for said damage; to replace the loss of natural water on the property by supplying water of equal quantity and quality; and to take all reasonable measures to prevent subsidence related damage to Plaintiff's property and structures.

15. The Defendants have violated the terms of the mining permit granted them by the State of West Virginia and, specifically, the Subsidence Control Plan they prepared as a part of the permit and the violations continue.

16. The Defendants have violated the Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Control Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to said Act and the violations continue.

17. The Defendants have violated all of the same by failing to provide for adequate maintenance, replacement, repair, or compensation to the Plaintiff for the damages he has suffered and by failing to take measures prior to mining to prevent subsidence on the property.

18. The Defendants' failure to provide for replacement, repair or compensation to Plaintiff for his damages was willful, wanton, intentional, conscious, reckless, and malicious, demonstrating outrageous indifference to the safety and welfare of the Plaintiff.

19. The actions of the Defendants' justify an award of punitive damages.

**WHEREFORE**, your Plaintiffs demand judgment against the Defendants in an amount sufficient to compensate them for their damages, punitive damages, pre-judgment and post-judgment interest; expert fees, attorney's fees and costs and such other further relief as the Court deems proper.

**PLAINTIFF DEMANDS A TRIAL BY JURY.**



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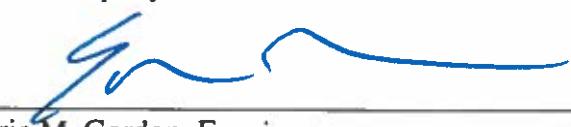
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017, I electronically filed the foregoing Amended Complaint with the Clerk of the court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following CM/ECT participants:

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